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IDAHO:

A DESCRIPTIVE TOUR

C. Aubrey Angelo

THE PACIFIC CENTER
FOR WESTERN STUDIES
at the UNIVERSITY OF THE PACIFIC
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C. AUBREY ANGELO

YE GALLEON PRESS
Fairfield, Washington
1969

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A

DESCRIPTIVE TOUR

AND

Review of its Resources

AND

ROUTE,

PREFACED BY A SKETCH OF BRITISH MISRULE IN VICTORIA, V. I.

BY C. AUBREY ANGELO
(CHAOS.)

SAN FRANCISCO
H. H. BANCROFT & COMPANY.
1865.

Plan of the Arrangement of Stock of H. H. BANCROFT & Co., Booksellers, SAN FRANCISCO

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INTRODUCTION.

READER: The following few pages have been rather hastily compiled from our notes of travel, and though not claimed to contain either talent or literary merit, possess considerable information in relation to the subject which is attempted to be illustrated. The author trusts ere long to place before the public, a more extended and elaborate review of the subject, which may probably be worthy of a niche in the library: for the present, he will rest on his prospective laurels, and ask the indulgence of his readers for the briefness of his subject; and to assure them, that with the exception of a few errors, or differences of opinion in details, his remarks may be implicitly relied on as truthful, and free from the gross misrepresentations which frequently appear in articles of this kind. Hoping they will cheerfully receive what little good the Gods send, he promises to do better next time.

AUTHOR.

459 copies printed, copy number 177

IDAHO.

PART FIRST.

DESCRIPTIVE TOUR—RESOURCES AND ROUTE.

The increasing importance of our Northern Territories having excited considerable interest both at home and abroad, attracted capital and immigration, and been the primary cause for the exodus of thousands of our fellow-citizens, has induced the author of the following pages to collate a portion of his waifs of travel—and with the single object in view of promoting the interests of this State and adjoining Territories, afford such information in relation to the new Dorado of the North as his experience authorizes him in making public. Circumstances have compelled him to abandon his original intention of compiling and republishing his Correspondence with the Press, in consequence of several itinerant scribblers having, in their so-called *mis*-Guides, unscrupulously extracted from his Letters his brightest gems of interest, and not having the fear of Chaos in their mind's eye, nor content with stealing his brains, have confirmed the literary theft by securing the copyright.

Previous to entering upon our Oregon and Idaho tour, let us take a slight view of the Fraser River gold fever, which prevailed anterior to the discoveries on the Columbia. We

have had our delusions and bitter experiences in the Gold Bluff and Kern River excitements; but these have been far surpassed by the British Columbia bubble. It may be interesting to some to read the following sketch of that crisis, which has at least one redeeming merit—its entire truthfulness—in which we, and ours, were not least among the sufferers. In the early part of 1858, a year ever to be remembered in the annals of Humbug, as having sounded the death-knell to brave hearts and happy homes, the people of California were suddenly thrown into the wildest state of excitement, by reports that a new El Dorado had been discovered on the Fraser River, an extensive stream running through the British Possessions of New Caledonia and British Columbia. For many years it had been rumored, through the agents and trappers of the Hudson's Bay Company, that gold existed in that locality; but up to this time little confidence was placed in those reports, and although several expeditions had been fitted out for Queen Charlotte's Island, (in one of which the crew were massacred,) they failed to attract any particular attention. However, the information appeared now to be so well authenticated, that all doubts were dispelled, and a general stampede, or rush, to the Northern maelstrom was the result; the valleys spoke to the mountains, and the latter quickly responded to the call. The miner left his claim; the farmer his plough; the clerk his desk; bankers their vaults; and merchants their stores; families were deserted; towns and villages abandoned; mechanical and agricultural labor suspended; and where hitherto

prospered a busy, thriving population, now became a second pandemonium of excited individuals, madly bent on sacrificing their property to obtain the means of defraying their expenses to the *Terra Incognita*. In vain the entire Press attempted to stem the current, and equally as vain were they advised to wait for further advices; the furiotic fevré had gone abroad, and with a frantic cry of "Fraser River!" an immense multitude of California's "bone and sinew" insanely rushed into that vortex—which soon proved the ruin of thousands, the death of many. Every steamer and sailing vessel were hastily put into requisition, to carry these misguided men to the fabled Land of Gold; but, alas! they little anticipated the dangers, difficulties, hardships and bitter disappointments that awaited them. Succeeding weeks beheld the astounding sight of three, four and five large steamships, besides a fleet of sailing vessels, leaving San Francisco; each steamer carrying from twelve hundred to two thousand passengers. The Directors of the Steamship Company were accused of encouraging the delusion, from mercenary motives; but in justice to them, I must add, that from personal knowledge, (and I was in a position to be well informed on the subject,) when the bubble exploded, and a reaction took place, they freely gave return passages to those who were destitute of means.

Over fifteen thousand mining licenses were issued at Victoria for British Columbia; besides these, an immense multitude proceeded to Fraser River, without touching at Victoria, by the way of Port Townsend, Whatcomb, and

other places on Puget Sound. Be it understood that, independent of those to whom licenses were issued, a large proportion of the immigrants remained in Victoria until they returned to California; to these may be added six hundred men employed by the Government in the celebrated farce of cutting a road in British Columbia. On the closest calculation, I have no hesitation in placing the total number of immigrants that entered the two colonies of Vancouver Island and British Columbia, (from Oregon, Washington Territory and California,) at thirty-five thousand! And of these, how many remain? Scarcely a fraction.

Nor was the writer of these pages exempt from the prevailing mania which attacked wiser men than himself. With an innate dread of becoming the "last man," and being left to tread the streets deserted, I quickly determined to join the general exodus, and, with my family, was one of the first to embark for the land of moonshine.

Mon compagnons de voyage consisted of a motley group of about fifteen hundred souls; among whom were artisans of every trade in creation, with a tolerably good sprinkling of sharp gamblers, briefless lawyers, insolvent merchants, and such ilk. Our arrival at Victoria was attended by a scene of confusion and disappointment, that speedily realized my worst fears for the future. In my unsophisticated innocence, I foolishly imagined I was entering a Colony governed by British institutions; but I was quickly undeceived: it was far worse than a Venetian oligarchy,—a squatocracy of skin traders, ruled by men whose life had been spent in the wilder-

ness in social communion with Indian savages; their present daily occupation being the sale of tea, sugar, whisky, and the usual *et cæteras* of a grocery, which (taking advantage of an increased population) they sold at the small advance of five hundred per cent.; by men who, to keep up the *entente cordiale* with the red skins, scrupled not (and the iniquitous practice is still continued), to supply them with arms and ammunition, well knowing that the same would be used in murderous warfare. I found these "small fry" claiming under some antediluvian grant, not only Vancouver Island, but a tract of country extending from the Pacific to the Atlantic Ocean! from British Columbia to Hudson's Bay! a territory of larger area than all Europe! The onward march of civilization was checked, all avenues to the mineral regions closed, by excessive, unauthorized, and illegal taxation; and a country abounding with a fair share of nature's richest productions, and which might now be teeming with a hardy, industrious population, was crushed and blasted, by a set of unprincipled autocrats, whose selfish interests, idle caprices, and unscrupulous conduct, sought to gratify their petty ambition by trampling on the dearest rights of their fellow-man.

In Victoria, the town lots, the suburban farms, and the water frontage were theirs; the rocks in the Bay, and the rocks on the earth—the trees in the streets, which served as ornaments to the town, were cut down by their orders, and sold for firewood; with equal right they claimed the trees, and dead timber of the forests, the waters of the Bay, and the fresh waters on the shores—all, all was theirs; nay,

I have seen the water running from the mountain springs denied, to allay the parched thirst of the poor wretches whom the *auri sacra fames* had allured to these inhospitable shores. They viewed with a jealous eye all intruders into their unknown kingdom, and every impediment was thrown in the way of improving or developing the resources of the Colony.* The coal mines were theirs, and this necessary article of fuel in a northern climate, was held by them at thirty dollars per ton! The sole and exclusive right to trade was theirs, and the claim rigidly enforced; the gold fields were theirs likewise; and a tax of five dollars on every man, and eight dollars on each canoe or boat was levied, before either were allowed to enter the sacred portals of British Columbia; this amount had to be paid hundreds of miles from the place where the gold was said to exist; when to these restrictions was added a heavy duty, collected by them, on all the common necessaries of life leaving Victoria, the weary, hungry, but still hopeful, traveler was permitted to pursue his way.

At this period there were neither means of conveyance to British Columbia, roads, or even trails when they got there; the entire country was one impenetrable mass of heavy, close timbered, mountainous, rocky land, and the only chance of reaching the country from Victoria, was by crossing the tempestuous and rough Straits of Georgia, in frail cockleshells called canoes, being half a dozen half-inch boards

* They looked upon all new arrivals with ill-subdued jealousy and suspicion, and distrusted them as a prætorian band of robbers, coming to despoil them of their ill-gotten wealth.

nailed together. Thousands of poor, deceived victims, vented curses loud and deep; provisions were held at starvation prices, and on every countenance we beheld anguish, despair and desperation; an inflated treasury drawn from the pockets of these poor men, denied them help; the ruling power mocked their misery, and they were coolly told by the Lord Paramount, that "there was gold in British Columbia, if they would go and find it." Such was the essence of a speech delivered by Governor Douglas to a large assemblage of miners. In one of his celebrated and unique dispatches, he designates this meeting as a desperate band of "filibusters;" and later still, a San Francisco writer, then, and I believe still "our own correspondent," of the *Times*, in one of his articles published by that journal, represented the entire population as "a horde of American banditti."

The miners asked for the means of transportation to the mines, for which they were willing to pay; but although the Hudson's Bay Company (of which Governor Douglas was Chief Factor) possessed several substantial sailing vessels, and two steamers then in the harbor, they roughly refused. Many hundreds in crossing the turbulent gulf, perished in the attempt; whilst most of those who succeeded in reaching the main land, were either drowned in the Fraser River whirlpools, frozen to death, crossing the snow-clad mountains, or scalped by the native savage! At length, this noble army of martyred pioneers, becoming disheartened, disgusted and penniless, claimed the assistance of the United States Government, and abandoned the country forever.

What short-sighted policy was here exhibited. A timely assistance to smooth the innumerable, and, to the miner, insurmountable difficulties in the way, would have retained the larger proportion of this useful immigration in the country.

Nor did the evil rest here; the return to California of so many, effectually put a stop to all further emigration from that quarter. One universal cry was heard: "A gigantic swindle!" "A magnificent humbug!" "A second Poyais!" to the uttermost ends of the earth—from Ind to the Pole, this was proclaimed in unmeasured language; the very welkin re-echoed the sound, and even the few who remained steadfast in the faith of a bright future, were more or less affected with the contagion. Circumstances have since induced them to alter their policy; finding their country neglected and deserted, their treasury empty and their Government bankrupt, they are getting up other visionary excitements, equally as artificial as the first, and relinquishing all hopes of any increase to their population from the mother country, are now willing to put up with the "horde of American banditti;" and for the object of inducing the latter to again visit them, have subsidized foreign steamers for the purpose of introducing California miners to their forsaken country, where

"Winter reigns with one eternal frown."

It would be fruitless to attempt imparting the faintest idea of the barbarism which, under former rules, prevailed in these benighted regions; particularly among the social Ishmalites,

who hang as an incubus in British Colonies. The social, moral, and political relations of these Pariah rulers, exemplify a condition, and display a deficiency of the common decencies and humanities of life, sufficient to create disgust and contempt; but this now is all past, and they are fast relapsing into their primitive state of insignificance and know-nothingism, skin traders, hewers of wood, and clam feeders. The form of government which they have endeavored to establish, is based on mediæval tradition from its incipiency, been a miserable failure, without legal basis or moral force; and has continued a by-word and jest, from the hour the bastard flag of the Hudson's Bay Company was first unfurled on the shores of the Pacific; created in the dark ages of ignorance and chicanery, increased in its strength by an equally fraudulent charter, this model protectorate has been carried on at the dictum of the most odious, corrupt and arbitrary clique that ever existed in ancient or modern times. Presided over by a man whose only virtue consists in his devotedness to ignorance, oligarchy, and the interests of his now *sub rosa* masters—the Hudson's Bay Company; deficient in any faculty, tending by example to elevate and enlighten the social circle, he stood forward a stigma and disgrace to the Government he misrepresented. Useless offices were created for still more useless men, the favorites of the hour. The "I do enact," and "I do proclaim," of this charlatan legislator, were done to-day only to be undone to-morrow. Not a month passed but farcical laws were promulgated, contrary to, and conflicting with, those previously made.

"Backwards we advance," was the motto of the man, main strength and stupidity the rule of the hour; his chief study being to devote what little energy he possessed in the attempt to make the people slaves, and victims to his corrupt whims and theories, and thus force them into his own cesspool of degradations. His epistles were embellished with an abundance of fanciful *pirouettes* and gyrations, well calculated to cause horror and amazement at the circumlocution office; while his free use of carbonic gas, and withal, the subtlety of the race with which he is connected, he indoctrinates them with heavy doses of *amor patriæ*. Dickens has immortalized him and the Skin Kings, in the most contemptuous style, while Bulwer compliments him as being

"The children's goblin, and the red man's ghoul."

But these witticisms only serve to strengthen him in his favorite theory, that

"'Tis better to reign in Hell than serve in Heaven;"

a sentiment in unison with his every-day life, but which he will yet learn

"Is registered in Heaven, and welcom'd in Hell."

In a ruler characterized by obstinacy and imbecility, without talent, observation or experience, what else can we expect but deliberate administrative malversation? Add to this a willing participation and a ready connivance with an abhorrent system of disgusting mésalliance, and we may well lift our eyes with astonishment that such a state of things are allowed to exist in a Colony acknowledging the sway of Queen

Victoria! What will they say in England, when it is generally known that men holding the highest offices in the gift of the Crown, have for years violated the Seventh Commandment, and are only induced to make the *amende honorable* by threats from their Spiritual advisers! And *O tempera, O mores!* such men enter the House of God, and partake of the Holy Sacrament! Listen, good people, in distant lands! Hearken, ye Exeter Hall propagandists of the Gospel; and thou, most charitable daughter of a worthy sire; you have sent the Bible to the heathen; the missionary to convert them; have given wealth to erect temples of worship, and establish schools: and these are the recipients, the dispensers, and the trustees of your benevolence.

His satellites were constantly employed in adding fuel to the flame of his ambitious aspirations, and feeding his inordinate vanity with the most contemptible flatteries; no veto was ever ventured to his absurdities, and thus blindly supported, he madly rushed into notoriety, the "observed of all observers." To all outside pressure of opinion, he was totally indifferent; possessing the heroism of all vulgar minds, like the mahoot on his howdah, he looks down with sovereign contempt on all things not of his own creation. It is related of a celebrated painter, that previous to his undertaking his *chef d'œuvre*, the "Foul Fiend," and to create an ideal deformity, he fed on raw meats, and surrounded himself in his study with disgusting reptiles, and other loathesome scenes; but this attempt to disease the imagination, sinks into insignificance, when compared to the cannibal

propensities of this man, who holds regular banquets and regales himself on what little blood and vitality the Hudson's Bay Company have left to the Colony. Like the viscious malaria surrounding the deadly Upas, his very presence seems to permeate everything that enters the poisonous circle of his authority.

In analyzing the character of this "necessity of the times," due regard should be had for the orbit in which he moves; to sustain his reputation for a species of savage tomfoolery, he was compelled to surround himself with a gorilla court, having about as much pretension to wisdom as Du Chaillu's intermediate link of humanity. But, notwithstanding his barbaric dispatches to his Government exhibit a *multum sufficit* of bad grammar, worse phraseology, and compound nonsense, combining a kind of Scotch metaphysics, sought to disarm ridicule, by a whining appeal, that his previous pursuits may be considered an excuse for any errors he might commit; assuring the noble Secretary of State that, with a little more experience in the art of misgoverning, it will "never be too late to mend."

Possessed of a boundless sea of obsolete knowledge, his mind is a perfect kaleidescope of ridiculous fancies. In the manners, customs and traditions of the aborigines he is well versed; in natural history *au fait*, from a sea otter to a mountain sheep; and in geography, his knowledge is not to be despised, having traveled from the scalping-ground of the red man to the wigwam at James' Bay.

Some nonentities of a bygone age maintain the doctrine, that it is lesé majesty to hold forth

against a ruling power. Away with all such exploded nonsense. This imbecile fossil was the unworthy possessor of the Queen's commission, and as such, his acts have become public property. And when we see a man, regardless of results, seeking, like the fabulous Wandering Jew, a peripatetic immortality, and a despicable prominency, at the sacrifice of all we hold dear and sacred, and alike repulsive to reason and common sense, it becomes our duty to call him to a strict account, advertise his misdeeds, and plant him as a land-mark to warn others who, with similar objects in view, become irretrievably ruined in worldly opinion. We may mourn over the infirmities of fallen human nature; but political depravity is a vice held in such detestation, that we instinctively recoil from representing it in its true colors. The miserable subterfuge, that the end justifies the means, is but too often the *modus operandi* of some men, who from a coincidence of accidental circumstances, are suddenly elevated to a position at variance with their nature, education and former pursuits of life. Here we see a superannuated man, in the dotage of second childhood, without, however, its innocence and purity of heart, possessing barely sufficient judgment to establish an understanding with a tribe of debased Indians, (with whom he is allied by domestic ties,) invested with supreme authority, exercising extra-judicial powers, studying to enforce fantastic theories, and trampling on time-honored institutions. What can we expect from such administrative incapacity, but the sorrowful view of a weak and tottering form of government, destitute of foundation, and crumbling under its

own weight. As before stated, his fanciful, *quasi* regulations become a dead letter, long before the ink with which they are written is dry, and his vague and undefined ideas of the real wants of the Colony, affords sufficient proofs to the most skeptical, of the entire absence of those abilities which such a position necessarily demand. In his attempts at law-making, he out-Heroded Herod, by substituting for the practical institutions of England a cumbrous, complicated, and decayed machinery, making himself and his solons the laughing stock of surrounding nations; a denizen of the forest for the last thirty years, he failed to realize the fact that he was behind the age, and "not the man for Galway;" a stranger to progressive improvement, he dispises every change as an innovation on feudal times; and ignorant of the "iron horse" revolution, resented as a flagrant insult, the introduction of all principles partaking of salutary and beneficial reforms. With him the terms, serfs and men, ignorance and education, barbarism and civilization, were synonymous; all modern improvements, intellectual or mechanical, ignored; law, as administered in the "gude old times," perfection; justice, a myth; remonstrance, treason; and the truth, a libel. As it was, is now, and ever shall be, was the *beau ideal* of all that was required between the despot and the people. This is indeed a degrading spectacle to parade before the community, and ill-calculated to maintain England in her proud position of having the best governed Colonies in the world.

His insufficiency in the performance of the "important duties" too hastily and unwisely

entrusted to his charge, is forcibly portrayed by the admissions in one of his famous epistles to the Duke of Newcastle, commencing, "I view with *dismay* the important duties which you call on me to perform," etc., etc. This open confession of incompetency is indeed a bad plea for his acceptance of office. Did he seek greatness, or was it forced upon him? The dispatch indicates,

> "——A cunning, which in fools supplies"—
> "And amply too—the place of being wise."

The excuse put forward in his behalf, that by reason of his inexperience in gubernatorial duties, he is not responsible for his acts, carries with it so much absurdity as to raise a strong conviction that his apologists are no further advanced in wisdom than himself. These antiquated wiseacres gloss over his faults, by giving him credit for the facility with which he can change his mind! Oh! save me from my friends! What a redeeming quality! But, even in giving him all due praise for his happy tact in reversing decrees; yet it unfortunately happens that the baneful effects of his poisons become fatal, before the antidote is applied, and in most cases the cure is worse than the disease. This has been beautifully illustrated in one of his "pronunciamientos," imposing a tax of five dollars on each dumb animal engaged in transporting provisions to the mines! Finding no addition to his "ways and means" by this *mule*-ish attempt to raise the wind, but a considerable falling off in the treasury, it was repealed; but, alas! too late. The sensible animals, having no faith in empty promises, and believing there was something else being enacted behind the

scenes, actually preferred resting on their hard-earned honors, sunning themselves on luxuriant pastures, and leaving the poor miner to pay the piper, or—go to the devil. The natural consequence was, that provisions rose to fabulous prices; the miners were nearly starved; and the packer gained more profit with one mule than he did before with three! This is a well known fact.

These Chaldeac "enactments," as he facetiously designates them, being arbitrary and contrary to law, were usually met with a blast from the Cosmo Press; and so magical was the effect on his nervous system, that they were quickly abrogated, and consigned to the "tomb of the Capulets." The clandestine manner in which he administered the affairs of the Colony, is unparalleled in the history of the world; while his too successful exertions in preventing the resources of the Island becoming known, until his own and parasites' speculations had been completed; the alienation to himself and the Company of the best tracts of land, and, ditto, the principal valuable town lots, are worthy of the highest commendation, and should strongly entitle him to consideration and reward. True, he failed in a laudable attempt to involve Britain and America in a bloody war, the *casus belli* being something about shooting a Hudson's Bay Company hog, at San Juan. But the consequence of this failure must not be attributed to him; his voice in the Executive Council was, first and last, to open a broadside on the Yankees, from each of the men-of-war, (a fact,) and blow Captain Picket's command to—you all know where.

The man who opposed this bloodthirsty advice, was Admiral Baynes, since honored by Her Majesty with Knighthood, as a reward for his able conduct in an affair, which had it been left to James Douglas, would have caused the sacrifice of thousands of lives.

And for what purpose has this man thus wantonly sullied the flag which he has *sworn* to honor? Simply, with the undisguised object of advancing the petty interest of a corrupt monopoly. Verily, the "Nine Skin Kings" have a zealous champion in the *ci-devant* chief factor; a most noble and redoubtable defender of their fraudulent claims! Pray, "Messrs. Ellice," and "My Lord Selkirk," cannot you do something to advance this "Ty–He" in the good graces of his "Liege Lady?" His object—the *ultima thule* of his wishes—the cynosure of all his hopes was (K) nighthood!!! And why should this promulgator of barbarism be doomed to pine in neglect, and his maladroit practices go unrewarded? Why not enroll his name as a K. C. B., in the list of those heroic and illustrious men who shed their hearts' best blood at Waterloo and Alma! 'Tis true, such an apparition has startled the universe, paralyzed bravery, and caused the honored dead to rise from their graves, to behold the presumptuous intruder thus daring to trespass on their sacred order; but I am sure the dear people will heartily rejoice at his receiving any mushroom honor that has removed him from their sphere, either to the realms above, (a forlorn hope,) or to the regions below, (we live on hopes,) a consummation, either way, most devoutly to be desired.

In closing this brief "Sketch of the First Governor of Vancouver Island," it would be an unpardonable sin to neglect a duty we owe posterity, in placing on record his peurile attempts to muzzle the Press. Ah! "that was the most unkindest cut of all," as it actually knocked into "pi" his warmest partisans, without realizing his beneficent intentions.

Farewell! thou first great cause—never understood! Follow your Kismet!—and may your shadow become beautifully less! The infant cries of those you have ruthlessly robbed of their home; the spirit of a minister of God, whose untimely fate in a watery grave was caused by your persecution, and the wail of an indignant and outraged people, shall attend you to that "bourne from which no traveler returns;" your requiem shall be sung by your own dark kindred, and the classic shores of "Dead Man's Isle" commemorate your reign with—

Here he is—and here he lies,
No one laughs—no one cries;
How long he'll stay—or how he fares,
No one knows—no one cares.

IDAHO.

PART SECOND.

THE HEGIRA FROM BRITISH COLUMBIA.

THE Fraser River collapse caused hundreds of miners to seek other fields for their labor, and as gold was known to exist on the Columbia, most of them proceeded to Oregon; there, at last, or rather in Washington Territory, was the true Ophir to be found. The extraordinary deposits of gold at Salmon River, Oro Fino, Warren, and numerous other places, astounded the entire population of the Pacific, and ultimately led to the development of the resources of a territory which ere long will become one of the brightest stars in the Union. Viewed either as an agricultural or mineral country, Idaho is now regarded as the richest and most extensive mineral region on the Pacific slope. Blessed with a genial climate and pure atmosphere, well watered by innumerable living streams, abounding in fruitful valleys and extensive pasturage ranges, Idaho is truthfully what the word designates, "the gem of the mountains," "the pride of the hills;" but although with these advantages, it would naturally become the home and abiding-place of thousands, it is her mineral resources which are the chief attraction

both to the miner and capitalist. Although the country has not been thoroughly prospected and explored, and is still in its infancy, the richness of the mines is authenticated beyond all doubt or dispute; 'tis true, some may be disappointed in their expectations of realizing a pile in an hour; but we have yet to see the man who has assiduously and patiently attended to his business, that has failed in obtaining a handsome reward for his labor. We do not propose to write an elaborate essay on the country, but shall confine ourselves to a brief synopsis, with the view of guiding not only the weary emigrant anxiously seeking a home—not only those in our midst, whose interests are identified with the prosperity of the North; but likewise as a medium of knowledge to those who are far away on the distant Atlantic shore. The information contained herein is derived from personal experience, during a three years residence in Oregon and Idaho; and though we may occasionally err in details, the reader may implicitly receive our representations as truthful.

GENERAL DESCRIPTION.

The mining region of the North extends from the base of the Rocky Mountains to the Cascade range on the Columbia. It has been well proved that the entire country between Beaver Head and Oregon is one continuous field of minerals; but although much might be written in favor of Oregon, and Washington Territory, we shall confine our remarks to Idaho, and point out the most eligible route for proceeding there.

Idaho Territory extends from 42° to 49° north latitude, and from 110° to 116° west longitude. There is some dispute in relation to the seat of Government, the Governor having removed it from Lewiston to Boisé City. The latter place has existed but two years, and owes its present importance to its central position, and the splendid farming and grazing lands with which it is surrounded. In the immediate vicinity is the new military Fort, situated on *Le Rivierre aux Bois*—"The Wooded River"—a name which modern parlance has barbarized into Boisé.

The placer mining ground in Boisé Basin is about forty miles from the latter place, embraces an area of thirty miles, and is principally confined to the neighborhood of what were once mere mining camps, now transformed into large towns, viz: Placerville, (at the foot of the Salmon range, and the main entrance to the Basin,) Centreville, on Grimes' Creek, and Idaho City, (formerly called Bannock,) on Moore, and Elk Creeks; the two latter streams have a never-failing supply of water; but except in the spring and early summer months, there is a great scarcity of that necessary fluid for mining purposes, both in the gulches and hill claims, and but for the aid of ditches, of which there are over one hundred and fifty miles completed, mining would entirely cease by the month of August. A company has been formed for the purpose of bringing in water from the Payette River, which if successful, will be of incalculable benefit to the miners. The surrounding mountains are covered with tamarac and fir, and lumber can now easily be procured at mod-

erate rates; most of the mining is done by sluicing, but in some claims they are using hydraulics. The average yield on the paying claims is eight dollars to the hand for ten hours work. A few claims are worked night and day by extra labor, and pay clear of expenses two ounces a day to the hand: the gold varies both in quality, fineness, and of course in value; that taken out from the creek and hill claims is the finset, considered the richest, and assays an average of $15.50 per ounce; while that obtained in the gulches seldom yields over $13. In the creek claims the bed-rock (on which the bulk of the gold is found) is about seven feet from the surface. As regards wages, a practical miner can always obtain from five to six dollars a day, boarding himself, which he can do very well for nine dollars per week—whisky and cards not included! On the quartz claims the usual rate of wages for the year round is four dollars a day, in some cases with the addition of board. The returns from the mining recorders show twelve thousand claims in active operation, exclusive of an equal number awaiting the introduction of water from projected ditches. The mining laws are fair and liberal; the discoverer is allowed four hundred feet, and all others two hundred feet each; a miner may hold a creek, gulch, hill, bar, and quartz claim in each district; but unless there is reasonable cause for the contrary, he must have work done on each of them. Idaho has several good schools and houses of worship, and can proudly boast of having a hale, healthy and industrious population; and I have no hesitation in saying, that in point of intelligence, energy and all the

necessary qualifications that constitute a well-organized and social community, these places will bear a favorable comparison with many of our full-fledged cities. A recent estimate places the population at sixty thousand souls; of these one-half are families, who will permanently locate in Idaho or the adjoining Territories. Most of the men who hang about the towns, (and their name is legion,) are either lawyers, doctors, or swaggering under the sobriquet of Colonel or General; the lawyer dresses well, eats and drinks well, looks well, and like others of his ilk, always does well. But view yonder medicine-man: his looks are haggard, his eye fishy, his mind vacant; no, not exactly that, for his whole appearance bespeaks the fact that he is inwardly cursing the country for being so abominably healthy, and so it is; there is really no sickness in Idaho, except what is imported through diseased constitutions, or from imbibing bad whisky.

THE QUARTZ LODES OF IDAHO.

But the most important interest that is destined not only to enrich Oregon and California, but to exert a powerful influence on the future of this young and prosperous Territory, is her immense quartz wealth. A continuous range of gold and silver-bearing quartz ledges on the Owyhee, Malheur, Malad, and other tributary streams of the Snake, have been thoroughly traced, and authenticated beyond the shadow of a doubt; several of these are being worked with efficient machinery; the "Oro Fino," "Morning Star," "Minear," with many others on the Owyhee, which for want of space we can-

not enumerate, are daily affording substantial evidences of their wealth. Perhaps the most valuable gold ledges in the Basin are in Boisé county, and being mostly composed of decomposed quartz, are easier and cheaper worked. The "Garrison-Gambrinus," "Illinois," and "Chickahominy," are doing and paying well. The custom mills find constant employment, at twenty-five dollars per ton, leaving the shareholders a handsome profit on a small capital. The "Fourth of July" lode, in Boisé county, prospects favorably, and is highly spoken of. The "Great Boisé River (consolidated) G. & S. Mining Co." own the richest lode in the entire Basin, called the Landon; it was originally discovered by Luther Landon, from whom it derives its name, and who is still a shareholder. The "Landon Lode" is situated in El Dorado Mining District, eight miles from Idaho City. The company have a good mill of their own on the property, and with the aid of a ditch, immense wealth is in their possession. About four hundred tons of rock are now lying at the mill, preparatory to crushing, some portion of which, taken indiscriminately from the pile, turned out a very handsome brick, averaging one hundred and forty dollars to the ton. The mine is being worked under the superintendence of Thos. S. Mitchell, Esq., assisted by Mr. Waite, men of experience, integrity, and ability. From the reputation they bear, as practical men, they enjoy the confidence of the shareholders. The shares are mostly held in San Francisco; but few are offered for sale, for so sanguine are the stockholders of ultimate successful returns, that as a general thing they decline selling. The

company have important interests in Placerville District, consisting of several thousand feet on the Pioneer. I am informed that the company are comparatively free from debt, and that no further assessments will be called for. All that is required to sustain my representations in relation to the immense mineral wealth of this section of country is capital and machinery, to disentomb millions of the precious metals from the crumbling rocks.

The Idaho quartz ledges are pronounced by geologists to be a continuation of the Nevada veins, and are mostly located on the main range running north, above the Klamath, from Washoe. There are one hundred and seventy ledges recorded, on each of which, including extensions, fifty thousand feet have been taken up. On several of these lodes, men are making good wages with a common arastra, worked by an overshot wheel; and in the immediate vicinity of the gulch, miners are taking out eight dollars a day to the man, with a single rocker. Everything we see or hear in relation to this important section of country confirms the opinion first entertained of its mineral wealth. South Boisé mines are attracting considerable notice; several crushing mills are at work. The "Idaho and New York Consolidated Co." have an extensive interest in Alturas county, on which they have placed a twenty stamp mill. Several others are now on the way. The result of the work done thus far has exceeded the most sanguine expectations.

While on this subject, I will state that two rich decomposed gold quartz veins, apart from each other, have lately been discovered in

Oregon, which, judging from the market value of shares at the present time, will be a fortune to the proprietors. One is the Santiam ledge, situated near the river of that name, in the lower Cascade mountains, within a short distance of Portland, and easily accessible by the way of Salem; the other, the Rockfellow lode in Baker county, not far from Auburn. Several wealthy capitalists have invested, and from their proximity to Portland, will doubtless have a very important influence on the future of Oregon.

In concluding this subject, let me add a few words of caution—not that I am cognizant of any circumstances bearing at present on the case: beware of unprincipled men coming into the market with wild-cat stock—with pretensions to ledges, whose very existence is mythical. In the sudden rush of capital which will ere long be seeking investment, the attention of capitalists will naturally be attracted to Idaho, and 'tis at this time that the capitalist stands in danger of falling a victim to those who live on their wits. All that is required is caution, and to deal only with men of established reputation in the transaction of all business affairs. I do not pretend to the gift of prophecy, but drawing my conclusions from my own knowledge, and adding thereto what the last few years have done for Nevada, Reese River, and Pike's Peak, I am firmly persuaded that where there is now one mill in Idaho, four years more will see one hundred—so will it be. In connection with this interest, Mr. J. W. Hussey, of No. 158 Broadway, New York, (formerly of the San Francisco Mint,) has estab-

lished himself as a mining agent exclusively for Idaho; he is spoken of here as peculiarly qualified for the business, and has the very best of facilities in obtaining information on the subject of mining, in which several of his friends and correspondents are extensively interested. He is perhaps the best available authority East, and his acquaintance and advice may be received with advantageous results.

The agricultural prospects, and grazing capabilities of Idaho, though limited in extent, are in other respects equal to any on the North Pacific, from the Grand Ronde Valley to Montana Territory, a distance of eight hundred miles. Passing through Idaho, the eye is gladdened by a constant succession of beautiful fertile valleys, undulating hills, umbrageous forests, and alluvial bottom lands—the latter particularly adapted to summer grazing; particularly is this the case in Boisé Basin, where, entwined around the mountain's side, are beautiful patches of garden land. The Boisé Valley is perhaps superior to all, both on account of its fertility, its milder climate, and its freedom from being covered with snow during the winters. The banks of the Payette and Weiser possess the same advantages; at these places immense herds of cattle and sheep are wintered and sheltered from the inclemencies of the weather; here, likewise, is produced all the hay and vegetables consumed through the entire basin; and here, likewise, is the nucleus of a thriving community composed of the immigration which for three years past has been journeying from the Eastern States to this land of promise, hope and sunshine.

ROUTE TO IDAHO.

I shall say but little in regard to the overland route *via* Chico, but confine my observations to my own experiences. Unless a wagon tunnel can be cut through the Buttes, to avoid those eternally snow-clad mountains, a road for the conveyance of heavy freight by teams is utterly impracticable; the feasibility of which can only exist as a myth, in a disordered imagination.

The time occupied in reaching Chico, from San Francisco, is just half of that going by steam to Portland. The Bidwell toll-road between Chico and the end of Surprise Valley, *via* Susanville, is a passable one for a distance—say two hundred and fifty miles—but here ceases all prospects of a stage or wagon road. From this point, a weary, arduous, toiling pilgrimage of two hundred miles, to Ruby City, the trail continues over lofty rugged mountains, whose very peaks bid defiance to the angry clouds around. Even on gaining Ruby City, you are sixty-two miles from Boisé City, and one hundred and two miles from Idaho City, (Bannock.) Possibly stock may be driven over this route during the months of July and August, although the preference is given to the one *via* Humboldt; in fact, 'tis a hard road to travel over.

The easiest, safest, cheapest, and most expeditious way of reaching Idaho, is seaward from San Francisco. From the latter place to Portland, Oregon, there is a tri-monthly line of steamers, besides a fleet of sailing vessels. There are two lines of steamships running alternately, without opposition; one is owned by

the California Steam Navigation Company; the other by Ben. Holliday; the cost and time of passage the same on each—twenty-five dollars steerage; forty-five cabin; time, three days.

These steamships, though bearing old and familiar names, have during the past two years been almost entirely rebuilt, and new boilers, machinery, etc., placed in them. My own experience justifies me in saying they are safe vessels to travel on, and officered by men who know and do their duty. During the late heavy winter gales they proved themselves seaworthy, and entitled them to that confidence from the traveling community which as a general thing is accorded them. The same may be said of the Columbia River boats; no expense has been spared in rendering them commodious, comfortable, and in every way adequate to the requirements of the times.

Although that mammoth institution, the C. S. N. Co., have a monopoly of both freight and passenger traffic on the river, they are not accused of extortionate charges, or of taking advantage of the recent influx of immigration. They have an immense capital invested in their boats and railroads, and although their pecuniary affairs are considered to be in a prosperous condition, I doubt whether the interest on the capital stock exceeds ten per cent. per annum.

The following Table of Distances may possibly afford information to the intending traveler:

	MILES.
From Portland to the Dalles—through in one day by steamer and railroad	112
Thence to Umatilla	111
Umatilla to Idaho City—*via* Meacham's Encampment	325
Dalles to Wallula	130
Wallula to Walla Walla	20
Walla Walla to Idaho City, *via* Linkam's mill per stage	270
Walla Walla *via* Meacham's, in saddle over the Blue Mountains	294
Idaho City to Boise City	36
Idaho City to Ruby or Silver City	100
Walla Walla to Lewiston	81
Walla Walla to Fisherville, Kootenai, *via* Lewiston	500
Dalles to John Day River	200
Total cost, including stage, steamboat, railroad, and meals on the road, from Portland to Idaho City	$80

Crossing the Columbia Bar, you call at Astoria, in the rear of which is the beautiful farming country of Clatsop, well watered by natural streams, possessing a rich soil, and a remarkably healthy climate. Not far from Astoria is the celebrated watering place called the Summer House, the general resort of the elite of Portland, and the invalids from all parts of Oregon. In ten hours after leaving Astoria you arrive at Portland, on the Wahlamette, the metropolis and entrepot of the Columbia River.

PORTLAND.

It may be that Portland was not the best site that could have been selected for a first class city; it may be that to a coincidence of accidental circumstances, she is indebted to the undisputed fact of being one; but now, any attempt to deprive her of that position is as foolish as it is futile. Here is centered the wealth, enterprise and influence of Oregon; substantial fireproof brick structures are continually in

process of erection; the neighboring farmers find at all times a ready market for their produce; distant from the river banks the place is healthy; taxes are light and living cheap. The public school is not as well conducted as it might be; but the private academies are fully equal to any. As an institution adapted to female education, the Catholic Convent of the Sisters is not surpassed by any on the coast. It is presided over by a Sister Superior, assisted by ten or twelve Sisters of Mercy; the whole being under the general guidance and advice of the Bishop. Often have I seen these truly estimable women, in the midnight hour, plodding through the wet, muddy and dark streets, and amid torrents of rain, eagerly pursuing their errands of charity and mercy. We have seen them relieving the poor and afflicted, nourishing the sick, consoling the departing spirit, and even after death, tenderly preparing their remains for burial. None but bigots deny them their meed of praise. The cemetery, which is an extensive one, is on the opposite side of the river, as is likewise the hospital for the insane.

The manufacturing interests of Portland are not to be despised; they have two good foundries, where machinery can be turned out equally as perfect, and at less cost than in San Francisco.

The banking establishment of Ladd & Tilton is established on a firm basis, possesses the confidence of the community, and does the principal banking business of the northern country. Tracy & Co. are the most extensive assayers; the market value of their bars standing on an equality with those of San Francisco.

Here are located the headquarters of the Oregon Steam and Railroad Companies. In Portland there is an abundance of good hotels, at moderate rates. If your purse is well lined, by all means go to Arrigoni's, a high-toned establishment, principally patronized by the aristocracy. The New Columbian, and What Cheer House, offer good accommodations at low rates, and are the principal stopping places for travelers.

Portland has five houses of worship; a good fire department; an effective, though small police; little crime; and though we are not particularly wedded to the place, we believe a man may go further and fare worse.

The following morning you proceed on board the river boats, which for accommodation and good living are equal to any on the coast. The rate of passage to the Dalles is four dollars (exclusive of meals, seventy-five cents.) The sight of the beautiful scenery on the river is alone worth the money. In one of my letters I have thus, perhaps rather poetically, described it:

No studied words can portray the magnificent scenery on the route; the waterfalls of a thousand feet—the perpendicular, castellated rocks—granite pallisades—and the indescribable vibratory motion of the vessel, gliding over an impetuous freshet, must be seen to be appreciated. In one glance you behold three snow-mantled mountains—a submerged prairie, a farmer's home and pride reduced to ruin and desolation, the cattle picking up their scanty subsistence on the distant hills, and the seals and salmon sporting on the waters around; anon the scene changes—the fleecy clouds are

obscured, a dark gloom surrounds us, and down comes the rain in torrents, heavy peals of thunder from a surcharged atmosphere, accompanied with vivid flashes of serpentine lightning, startle us to a full sense of the littleness of man, the grandeur, the power of the Deity.

Cape Horn is passed, the Castle Rock ahead; the boat makes a gigantic struggle to cross the stream against an impetuous current, pauses for a moment in the vortex—we arrive at the wharf. Hastily seating ourselves on the cars, the locomotive is attached, a shrill whistle is heard, and off we go. Our course continues along the river, the foaming waters at our side—fragile bridges groan and bend as we pass over them, women and children cling to their kindred, and even men close their eyes, and gaze no longer. We are no enthusiasts, yet we cannot but rhapsodize while viewing these truly sublime and picturesque scenes. At the termination of this portage we are transferred to a fairy stern-wheel steamer, *en route* for the Dalles. Here again we behold the sparkling waterfalls descending the steep precipices, floating mists faintly concealing the rugged peaks, the changing though beautiful tints from a sunny sky, reflecting their purpled rays on the watery surface; wild flowerets peeping from mossy banks, emerald-tinted valleys around, at length the varied shrill notes of the wild birds recall us to the world. With the deepest regret, we bid farewell to one of the happiest days of our life, and in the midst of such a cloud of dust that no pen can describe, we are safely landed at the Dalles, twelve hours from Portland.

DALLES.

This charming place possesses a climate peculiarly its own, blows hot and cold in the same breath, and to complete your comforts, the air is usually loaded with dust. But even with these disadvantages, nature has destined this place to be the *primiere* receiving depôt for all the commerce connected with the upper country. Here is the diverging point for all the northern and southern trade, and the country being considered healthy, it is often visited by persons from all parts of the State. It has a good public school, three churches, and a population of about two thousand. Within a short distance of the town is Fort Dalles. I might as well attempt to define a cyclodial line without a diagram as to describe the multitudinous mass of misshapen buildings which characterizes this military post. The site is on Mill Creek, and cost the Government two millions of dollars. We spent a pleasant time here in a cottage of content and peace. On an eminence in front are the Stars and Stripes proudly floating in the breeze; around us the wild rose in full bloom, the unripe gooseberries, tormenting by their tartness the palate of the little ones, and the still more plentiful poison-oak, tormenting the legs of our lady-love; in the rear is the running creek, walled in by steep frowning glories, sparkling with that most delicious of all piscatory food, speckled mountain trout. But we must bid adieu to such scenes, and pursue the uneven course of life.

One night at the Dalles, and you are rudely aroused from your slumbers, and again take

your seat on the cars for Celilo, twelve miles, at which place you arrive in one hour, and immediately proceed on board the boat bound for Umatilla, or Wallula. Celilo is located on the south bank of the Columbia River, and in the Indian jargon means a "sand," or "floating cloud." Verily, it is well worthy its name—clouds of sand are continually sailing through the air, and when rude Boreas gets truly angry, 'tis a terrible sight to look upon. The hill-sides are bleak and bare; dark, rugged mountains glimmer through the lowering clouds, and nought meets the eye but a gloomy, dreary and God-forsaken waste; the winds! no pen can do justice to their strength; the very waters are silent as the storming blasts in lightning-speed pass by. The general features of the country are rough and discouraging, and hastily seeking refuge in the comfortable saloon of the boat, we bid adieu to Celilo. The following day we arrive at the Umatilla, from which point there is a line of stages running to Idaho.

UMATILLA.

This town, which has suddenly arisen into notice and celebrity, is located on the south bank of the Columbia River, about thirty miles below the junction of the latter with the Snake stream. At certain seasons of the year, when the winds are hushed, the waters still, skies clear, and sands dormant, Umatilla is a passable place to dwell in; a broad, expansive river in front, Alpine hills on the north, and majestic peaks of lofty mountains, shrouded by floating clouds kissing the blue skies, the scene presents a *tout ensemble* seldom met with. But, alas! for

the infallibility of human events. See it when the wind blows, see it when clouds of sand, and mist, madly sail through the air; see it when the waters are angry, when merchants and bar-rooms close their doors against the common enemy; when trade is dull, and no pack trains are visible; when winter is on hand, the mountains covered with snow, and steamboats ill-disposed to relieve the monotony of the scene, by forcing their way through floating fields of ice, and the town becomes the last place on earth a mortal would desire to dwell in. To chance alone is the place indebted for having become the *entrepôt* for a large proportion of the trade destined for the upper country. The town is situated on an elevated plateau, facing the river, and considerably above the reach of the highest flood. On the upward trip, the steamers usually stop over night to discharge; most of the heavy freight, particularly machinery, is landed here, and conveyed over the Blue Mountains in wagons. The stage time occupied from this point in reaching Idaho is usually six days; the route, particularly between the rivers and the foot of the mountains, is through a continued bed of sand, where, much against your will, you are compelled to imbibe more than a *quantum sufficit* of sand and alkali. It is not our purpose to recommend any particular route, and most certainly not this. Thirty miles above, and we arrive at

WALULLA,

The terminus of steam conveyance to those bound to Idaho. Most of the travel goes by this route, which is preferable on many ac-

counts; a well-horsed stage, with a skillful driver, awaits your arrival, and conveys you over a twenty mile good road to Walla-Walla. Here you may procure supplies and outfit, at a small advance on Portland prices. It being the general rendezvous of the up-country merchant and miner, it is a good halting-place for a few days, for the purpose of acquiring information. Hotels are plenty, and living cheap. Thomas & Co.'s line of stages leave here twice and sometimes three times a week for Idaho, going through in summer in less than four days. To those who are the slaves of time, this is the most expeditious mode of traveling, and is generally adopted; but to our taste, the cheapest and most comfortable mode of traveling between Walla-Walla and Idaho, and the one which we adopted and shall describe, is the Saddle: A good horse or mule can be purchased at the former place, and readily sold in Idaho for a trifle less than you paid for him. There are stopping-places on the entire route, where the traveler can satify his cravings of hunger, for one dollar a meal, and quench his thirst in like proportion. The trail over the Blue Mountains, from slope to slope, is forty-two miles; a good road, well watered and shaded the entire way, by magnificent forests of timber. On the eastern summit, about half-way over the mountains, is "Meacham's Encampment;" here is one of the best, cleanest, and most comfortable hotels on the entire route; eggs, chickens, milk, sweet butter, and fresh vegetables is your bill of fare, and quiet, civil attention the distinguishing feature of the Meacham family.

Pursuing our journey, we arrive in Le Grande, the entrance to Le Grande Valley. This town is becoming one of importance, situated on the main road to the mines, and on the borders of an extensive agricultural valley, the principal portion of which is under cultivation. Le Grande offers singular advantages, both to the settler and trader; pine, fir and tamarac are in abundance, and several mills are actively at work getting out lumber. The valley is thirty-five miles long, by twenty wide, and through its entire course is composed of a rich, deep loam, well-watered, smilingly inviting the husbandman to reap a rich harvest from its virgin soil. At the end of the valley is a large hot sulphur lake of four acres, which no traveler passes by without partaking of its medicinal qualities; we found the addition of a little Bourbon a great improvement.

The following day we enter Powder River Valley, and quarter ourselves in a smiling little village, bearing the name of the illustrious princess Pocahontas; in its outward features it bears a strong resemblance to the Grande Ronde, but the soil is very inferior, a great portion being covered with alkali, sage and greasewood; the place has a good hotel, with other fixins, a good school-house, and, judging from appearances, an honest, industrious community. Crossing Powder River, we pursue an easterly course, until we arrive at Burnt River. The course of this stream is east and west, and runs through a broken ridge of volcanic mountains; the soil is of a red nature, having the appearance of burnt lava. The trail compels you to cross and recross the river repeatedly, and when

the freshets destroy the bridges, we find it a rather troublesome operation.

Another day's ride brings us to the summit of a small hill, and here, for the first time, we obtained a splendid view of the Snake River. The scene was truly magnificent; both man and beast halted in rapturous admiration. Within a few miles we beheld, as far as the eye could reach, an expansive sheet of water equally as large as the Columbia; on the one side an extensive sandy beach; on the other a pebbled strand, giving it all the appearance of a inlet or bay on the sea coast. In the foreground were rolling, green hills; at a distance, the Boisé, Payette and Salmon mountains. Immediately under our gaze were several hundred pack animals, awaiting their turn to cross the ferry; the waters were alive with fish, whilst flocks of birds added more than common beauty to the landscape.

As we approached the river, the glowing sun was setting o'er the hills, leaving his purpled rays awhile to gild the clouds; the pale-faced moon was rising in all her native loveliness, diffusing an electric light o'er the adjacent prairies, and at a distance reflecting a bright hue on what resembled a silver lake—a scene never to be forgotten.

Crossing at Old's Ferry, we proceeded in a south-easterly course, and forded several small streams, (since bridged,) in one of which the writer narrowly escaped an untimely grave by being absorbed in quicksands and mud. This *contretemps* over, we journeyed on in sight of the Truckee, until we come to the Weiser, a noble stream running east and west, and empty-

ing into the Truckee a few miles above where we forded it. It is one hundred and fifty yards wide, very steep, with a powerful current sweeping down its center. Here we encamped in company with several pack trains, numbering four hundred animals.

The following day we crossed the Payette River, (named after an attaché of the Hudson's Bay Company,) rising in the Salmon River Mountains. The stream runs east and west, and discharges in the Snake; in some places it is broader than the latter, with a more impetuous current; considerable risk is incurred in swimming this river, and no little judgment required in gaining the opposite bank. By the light of the silver moon we began the ascent of the Salmon or Boisé range; the wind was blowing a perfect hurricane from the northeast; occasional volumes of snow were drifting in our faces, and with difficulty we preserved our equilibrium on the steep mountain side. Above us, enveloped in flying clouds, were endless peaks; below, a thick, hazy atmosphere, completely shutting out from view the world around us; on each side of our course snow-banks, varying from fifteen to twenty-five feet deep, leaving us but a narrow trail, scarcely wide enough for a single mule to travel on. By dint of great exertion we gained an elevation of several thousand feet; here we were stopped by a temporary barricade, called a toll-gate, where men were employed shoveling the snow and keeping the trail open. One dollar is demanded; cheerfully paid. With our exhausted animals we pass on, and without wood, fire or water, are compelled to encamp for the

night. ☞ CAUTION.—No person whose lungs are in the least effected, and who is not perfectly sound in wind and limb, should hazard the dangerous experiment of crossing these rugged mountains, particularly during the winter season. I forbear dwelling on the miseries of that cheerless halting place; not for the mines of Golconda would I spend such another harrowing, sleepless night; and even the return trip was associated with such unpleasant recollections, that I selected a circuitous route in preference to facing the peaks that were nearly becoming our shroud and burial place; however, we survived it all, and CHAOS has come again! For several days previous, the thermometers in the valleys and prairies ranged from 75° to 84°; but on the summit of these mountains, it never arose above zero. We left our snow-bound encampment at the first dawn of day, and after four hours of hard travel entered Placerville, heartily and sincerely grateful to Him, for having preserved us through the horrors of that night. May we never see the like again!

PLACERVILLE

Is situated in a ravine, surrounded by heavily timbered forest land, graduating from the eastern slope of the Salmon range, and the main entrance to the Boisé Basin. In every nook, valley and hill, gold is found in more or less quantities. Most of the mining work is done by sluicing, the paying dirt averaging four, five to six cents to the pan, commencing within three feet of the surface, and descending through six or eight feet of gravel to the bed-

rock. It is doubtful whether the future will not prove that a rich strata of gold exists *beneath* what is now called the bed-rock. The gold lies in pockets and crevices, and pays well. Valuable quartz lodes are in the vicinity. The "Pioneer," "Golden Gate," and "Lawyer," have been traced, and reported favorably on. The "Daly" is likewise considered a good ledge.

CENTREVILLE,

On Grimes' Creek, is five miles from Placerville, in the central part of a rich and extensive mining district. The entire creek, forty miles in length, has proved to be rich in gold and quartz, and at the present time is being extensively worked. Many families who have recently crossed the Plains are here located, and the place bids fair to be a prosperous and flourishing town; it has somewhat of a rival in a new locality, situated above, at what was formerly called Hogam's, now Pioneer City, the spot where a worthy man (Mr. Grimes, from whom the creek derived its name) was killed by the Indians. The miners and company with whom he was associated as their leader, *promised* to provide for his widow and children, but I am informed *they failed to keep their word!* During the mining season, the parsons and doctors worship the Golden Calf, and make extreme love with the pickax and shovel.

IDAHO CITY (BANNOCK.)

This place, which has now assumed some notoriety, as being the best mining camp in the Basin, and the general rendezvous of miners, speculators and gamblers, is located on what in

mining language is denoted a bar, at the confluence of Elk and Moore's Creeks, the latter emptying into Boisé River, forty miles south of the mining camp; situated on a beautiful flat, surrounded by forest hills, the site presents a truly picturesque appearance. In these praises I include Buena Vista, connected with, and only divided from Idaho City by the creek. Buena Vista bids fair to be the main place of business, more particularly since the late conflagration destroyed a large portion of Idaho City. Either place is destined to become important trading points. The richest part of the ground thus far developed is confined to an area of fifteen miles from the town; beyond that distance, the mines gradually become poorer and more spotted; and in the neighborhood of the quartz ledges, which are *not of a decomposed* nature, scarcely pay for the working. The contrary is the case where the rocks are soft, crumbling and calcareous. The bar claims are very rich. I have myself taken eleven dollars out of a pan of dirt, of one shovelful! This was from the Moulthrop & Knowles claim. The average yield of the gulch claims, particularly the Thomas, Nobles, and one or two others, is fully an ounce per day to the man. A few claims do not make this, while others far exceed it. If the number of claims are any indication of a man's wealth, I am particularly rich at the present time. I have an interest in four quartz, two creek and one gulch claim. The quartz is eternally covered with snow, those in the creek with water, and, alas! they do say our gulch claim is entirely destitute of even the color of gold. *Nous verrons.* There

are plenty of amusements in Idaho City, both moral and immoral; the gambling table, of course, takes the lead; the theatres are well patronized, more particularly when Julia Dean Hayne condescends to shed the light of her countenance on the Boiséites; she is as well appreciated and esteemed in Idaho as she is in Oregon, and invariably draws good houses; in fact, she has a peculiar tact of making friends wherever she goes.

Occasionally the eye glances o'er the road, and there we behold long trains of pack animals and prairie wagons winding their way along the serpentine walk; daily, immense trains of traveling barges, occupying the road for several miles, are met with; and to spend a night with one of these encampments, consisting possibly of five hundred teams, and two thousand wearied souls, from the Western States, animates us with unusual pleasure. This immigration mainly consists of families who, from various causes, have fled the homes of their youth; care-worn, yet light-hearted; wearied with their pilgrimage, yet hopefully smiling amid their tears, they seek the Pacific shores as the terminus to their sorrows; they come for rest, peace, and the grave! And let them cast their anchor either in California, Oregon, Idaho, or Washington Territory, they will not be disappointed; under the Stars and Stripes they will find a home; beneath the Stars and Stripes they will be protected in liberty, life and property; and under that banner be cordially welcomed, aided, and hailed as American citizens. No doubt or hesitation need be felt; whether you come as artizans or farmers, hus-

bands or bachelors, a brilliant future awaits you; the mechanic will meet ready employment; the farmer, with thousands of acres of productive untilled land, asking but labor, sobriety and honesty to yield forth a golden harvest of earth's dearest and most necessary treasures; the husband and father will be greeted with social enjoyments, and good schools for their children; and the bachelors—alas! poor Benedick, but a short time will you enjoy your single blessedness. Let the latter class see such loving eyes as we have seen; such pouting lips; such winning smiles from nature's instincts; such visions of angelic purity, and, and—we'll say no more; that Divorce Court is an ugly, matter-of-fact place.

Think not the immigrants are unhappy in their pilgrimage, see no pleasure, or are entirely destitute of comforts on the road; the excitement of the journey, change of scenery, hunting, fishing, and the deer, bear and elk chase, afford pleasures which the city business man knows but little of. Most of the trains have a fresh milch cow with them, and some a chicken coop, containing their favorite hens! In my after-travels in the mountains, I frequently camped with immigrants bound to Oregon and California; scarcely a family were without that detestable article—at least, to our ears—a sewing machine. Wheeler & Wilson's, and Singer's, were those principally in use.

I could extend these pages by the description of many scenes which I am sure would be read with pleasure; at some future time I may do so; for the present, we will conclude with a few pictures of life. Understand, I am depicting life

as it was two years ago in Idaho; not, I am happy to say, as it is now. Since then, a vast improvement in the moral, social and political condition of the population has taken place, to which I have previously alluded.

LIFE AND DEATH IN A MINING CAMP.

It may be interesting to learn the state of society at that period, and the characteristic way in which sinful mortals were suddenly hurried into eternity. It is worthy of remark that, with a few exceptions, the victims have been men who have bid defiance to the laws, and openly prided themselves in having killed their man. In our tour of travel, silk was not always in our web; but from a coincidence of circumstances, our pathway has been strewed with acts of falsehood, frailty, and blood. So necessary had the relish for death become, that it was a common slang expression, "Who for breakfast to-day?"—meaning, who had been killed?—and should a morn pass by without such a curse, the community looked gloomy and disappointed! Within a period of a few weeks, fifteen lives were sacrificed with impunity, at the altar of blood! Drink, cards, women, and all the baser passions of man, were the primary cause; an All-seeing eye watched their course, and ordained that those who lived by violence should die by the same means. But do not think the people were all murderers; a large majority frowned on these daily tragedies; but at the same time they felt they were quietly getting rid of a horde of dangerous desperadoes.

CUSTOMS OF THE COUNTRY.

All debts, feuds and kisses are settled on a Sunday; the man who neglects paying his bills, avoids a quarrel with a friend, or neglects to salute his lady-love, is forever dishonored. It is astonishing with what facility a man can not only change his general appearance, but even the language of his country, boyhood and home; men of talent, education, and former piety, use a jargon of slang phrases, whose only merit consists in their want of any distinct meaning.

SUNDAY.

This is Sunday—the solemn echo of the tolling church bell was unheard—the sacred edifice that revives the recollection of love, home, and early joys, is unseen—the aged spinster, book in hand; pater-familias, with cherubs aside; mammas, belles, beaux, and even the outward form of religion, real or artificial, were alike invisible. This is the settling day with merchant and miner; one presents a villainous-looking paper, charged with figures; the other, a long, greasy bag, charged with gold; Shylock wins; dust loses! Sunday—the weekly meeting; general rendezvous of the bulls and bears; Wall street illustrated; Ursa Major in the ascendant, and his Satanic Majesty the ruling spirit and genius of the hour; thermometer, 92° in the shade; rot-gut, twenty-five cents at the bar; myriads of mammoth bottle-flies, pregnant with poison, sailing through the air; whisky the beverage, and monté the game; angels weep, mortals curse, dogs fight, and heavy peals of thunder announce the dis-

pleasure of the Supreme; rapine, blasphemy and murder were in our midst; a breathless corpse lay weltering in his blood; law is violated, and the victim unavenged; the Sabbath closes with a clouded moon frowning on the sins of the day! Reader, dost thou like the picture?—'tis but a fraction of the truth of what a Sunday was at Boisé in 1863.

CONCLUSION.

Reader, our task is done—our tale imperfectly ended, and CHAOS' waifs of travel become a dream of past reminiscences, a fragment of knowledge, and a remnant of a spirit fast fading away. We have traveled together in glens and o'er mountains, through storm and sunshine, in prosperity and adversity; and until we again seize the quill—*au revoir*.

POSTSCRIPT.—It was the intention of the author to attach a map of Boisé Basin to these pages, in order to afford information as to the geographical position of the different towns and mining camps; but want of correct data has prevented him from doing so. In a short time an improved chart, with all the late surveys and corrections, compiled by William H. Knight, will be published by H. H. Bancroft & Co. of San Francisco; and from the well-known reputation of the compiler for accuracy, we anticipate a truthful delineation of Idaho Territory.

ERRATUM.

On page 33, second line of last paragraph, for *C.* S. N. Co., read "*O.* S. N. Co."

NOTICE.

An extended, revised, and elaborate edition of the foregoing, containing views of scenery and locations on the route to Idaho, with a map of Boise Basin, will shortly be published.

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BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES

Charles Aubrey Angelo was a correspondent for the *Daily Alta California* when he joined the rush to the Boise gold mines in the spring of 1863, in the newly organized Idaho Territory.

Little is known of the early life of Angelo but we know that he was born in London in 1810 of English parents and that he was educated in England. The years 1839 to 1859 (exact dates cannot be verified) were spent in India and China in newspaper work. Angelo's displeasure with Canadian authorities has an embarrassing foundation. He was employed as a clerk in the Customs House in Victoria but was convicted of falsifying accounts and was sentenced to a year's imprisonment, this about July, 1859. In January, 1860 he petitioned Governor Douglas for release, stating that his wife and eight children were nearly destitute. In June of 1860 he petitioned again to have the remaining three weeks of his sentence remitted on the same grounds. This petition received a cool reception as the Governor did not "consider it expedient in the present case to interfere with the strict course of justice." After his release he left the colony. Death came in San Francisco on May 30, 1875, at age 65.

Information is from the Victoria *Gazette,* Feb. 15, 1859; and from the Victoria *Colonist,* various dates in 1859, 1874 and 1875.

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Angelo, C Aubrey.
Idaho: a descriptive tour [and review of its resources and route. Prefaced by a sketch of British misrule in Victoria, V.I., by] C. Aubrey Angelo [Chaos] Fairfield, Wash., Ye Galleon Press, 1969.
52p. 23cm.

Reprint of 1865 edition published in San Francisco by H. H. Bancroft.

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1.Idaho-Description and travel. I.Title.

S0-AWB-085